

# NATIONAL OMBUDSMAN REPORTING SYSTEM (NORS) TRAINING PART III

## Verification, Disposition, Referral, and Closing Cases Basic Principles

**REMINDER:** Throughout these training materials “Ombudsman” is used as a generic term that may mean the state Ombudsman, a representative of the Office, or the Ombudsman program. Use the NORS tables developed by the Administration for Community Living/Administration on Aging with these training materials when indicated (Table 1: NORS Case and complaint codes, values and definitions; Table 2: NORS Complaint codes and definitions; and Table 3 State Program Information, OMB Control Number 0985-0005). The NORS codes and definitions used in these materials are taken from the ACL tables 1-3 and are not to be modified.

### Verification

1. Verification is a confirmation that most or all facts alleged by the complainant are likely to be true.
2. Each complaint must have a verification status, *verified* or *not verified*.
3. Ombudsmen always attempt to determine the facts of complaints as part of the complaint investigation process. The Ombudsman investigates and works to resolve complaints on behalf of one or more residents for purposes of resolving the complaint to the resident’s satisfaction and of protecting the health, welfare, and rights of the resident. Ombudsmen must support and maximize resident participation in the process of resolving the complaint and follow the direction of the resident.

### Disposition

1. Disposition is the final resolution or outcome of a complaint. You may perform many activities when resolving and investigating a complaint, but there is only one outcome.
2. Each complaint must have a disposition code, whether the complaint is verified or not.
3. When choosing a disposition code (*partially or fully resolved, withdrawn or no action needed, not resolved*), always follow the direction of the resident. If the resident cannot communicate his/her satisfaction, the Ombudsman may look to the resident’s representative or to the complainant to determine if the resolution is consistent with the rights and interests of the resident. See the *Verification, Disposition, Referral, and Closing Cases* document for more complete instructions.

### Referral Agency

1. A referral agency is the agency or agencies to which a complaint was referred to as part of the Ombudsman program’s plan of action for complaint resolution.
2. Every complaint must have a referral code, if there was no referral; use code “no referral was made.” See Table 1 CD-06 for the list of referral codes.
3. You may have more than one referral agency for a complaint.

### Complaint and Case Closed

1. Each case can only have one case closed date.
2. Each complaint can only have one complaint closed date.
3. Close the case after completion of actions on all complaints within the case and every complaint has a referral code, verification, and disposition code.